THE BRETHREN'S EVANGELIST
A Religious Weekly,
Having the BIBLE for its Creed.

H. R. HOLSINGER, - - - Editor.

ASHLAND, O., APRIL 16, 1884.

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Ordering the Brethren's Evangelist and Books, and Sending Money:

In all cases write the name of each subscriber, post-office, county and State plainly.

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In order to help our agents along in getting subscribers, we have concluded to offer the balance of the year for $1.50. That is, from the time the subscription is received. We still have back Nos. from January first, and shall be pleased to furnish new subscribers with the full year for two dollars, or the first six months for $1.00. We will try to accommodate our friends. From this on all should say what they wish, whether back numbers or not. When nothing is said we send back numbers, as a rule.

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WHO IS TO STAND AT THE HEAD.

We will give a half dozen Cloth Hymnodies to the church which shall have the largest list of subscribers to any one office by the first of June, providing it shall not be under forty.

To the church having the second list in length we will give one fourth dozen cloth Hymnodies, providing it shall not be under thirty subscribers. Persons competing for the first prize cannot take second.

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Those competing for first or second prizes can not take the third, but transfers may be made at any time up to within fifteen days of the first of June.

The following is a list of the leading postoffices, as they now stand:

Waterloo, Iowa,	33	New Enterprise, Pa.,	26
Johnstown, Pa,	42	Falls City, Neb.,	24
Dayton, Ohio,	29	Huntington, Ind.,	18
Lanark, Ill.,	27	Covington, Ohio,	20
Ashland, Ohio,	22	Morrill, Kansas,	16
Berlin, Pa.,	20	Meyersdale, Pa.,	18

OUR PREMIUM LIST.

To invigorate our agents to greater efforts, and assist them in accomplishing more good, we offer the following premiums:

1. To the carpenter or builder who sends us the largest number of subscribers for the balance of the year, by May 1st, a set of Palliser's Useful Details. Price three dollars. Only carpenters and builders to compete for this prize. It is very valuable to mechanics in the above line. It contains outlines and patterns for everything from a moulding to a roof-stool.

2. To the person sending us the largest number of subscribers for the balance of the year, by May 1st, we will give a copy of all the publications advertized at this office, amounting to $4.34, including one morocco Hymnody.

3. For the second largest number of the same kind, we will give a year's subscription to the *American Agriculturist*.

4. For the third largest number, a morocco Hymnody.

5. For the fourth, a year's subscription to the Chicago Weekly *News*.

Any new subscriber or any old one renewing for the balance of the year, at $1.50, may select any ten cent item from our list, or any two or more making ten cents, in addition to the paper.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

I would like to have a few questions answered by you, as they occur to my mind.

1. What is the true name of your church?
2. Who was the founder of it?
3. The true doctrine of the church.

Please answer the latter as fully as possible, with scriptural proof for the same. Would also like you to point out the difference between your church and the old Dunkards, with reasons for the same. There are many of the old kind of Dunkards through here (Somerset county, Pa.), and I wish to know the difference between the two bodies. I am not yet a church member, and before I undertake to join a church of any kind, I am determined to know its doctrines in full, and be able to prove the same according to Scripture, for Scripture says, "Prove all things."

* * *

As the above was not intended for these columns but for private reply, the name of the writer is withheld. We have written the author, informing him of our intentions, and referring him to these columns. As it would require several days hard work to answer all the questions fully and at length, we could not afford to spend so much time from our business; but by preparing the answers for our paper, they may afford satisfaction to many others, and count as work to us at the same time.

1. The true name of our church is the Brethren church. This name was readopted at the time of the reconstruction of the church, at Dayton, Ohio, on the 7th of June, 1883. The church has been legally incorporated under that name, and that is, therefore, its legal and ecclesiastical name. Other denominations may and will use the name Brethren in connection with other titles, such as United Brethren, River Brethren, German Baptist Brethren, and so forth, but none can use the simple, scriptural title: The Brethren, except our church.

2. Who was the founder of the Brethren church? The origin of the church is given about in this manner: It originated in Germany about the year, 1708. A number of persons who were professors of religion and members of one of the churches of the community in which they lived, by reading their Bibles, became convinced that they were not obeying all the requirements of the Gospel of Christ. They formed themselves into a kind of Bible class, and read and studied the scriptures carefully and prayerfully. After they had done this for some time, and when they were confirmed in their duties to a more perfect obedience, they organized themselves into a church. No one particularly became the founder of the denomination. A man by the name of Alexander Mack was their first minister, but in no other sense can he be called the founder of the church. It is not necessary here any farther to notice the organization and early history of the church. It can be found in any reliable church history. It can be found by referring to the name Brethren or Tunkers, and in some works they are catalogued with Baptists.

3. What is the doctrine of the church? This question our querist desires to have fully explained. To comply with his request to his satisfaction, as we comprehend it, will be no small task. We might say in a few words, that the teachings of the Gospel of Christ, as it is recorded in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is the doctrine of the Brethren church. All it teaches, and nothing else. We believe the Word of God to be the perfect plan of salvation. "The law [or doctrine] of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" Psalms 19: 7. It therefore needs and will suffer no additions or subtractions. "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22: 18, 19.

In a general way the above would be a sufficient answer. And we do not propose to give anything *more*, but we shall have something farther to say about that which we have given. We are sometimes told that all the churches "pretend to take the New Testament as their creed:" which is true; they *pretend* to take the Gospel for their creed; but they then deny their profession by making another besides the Gospel, and frequently very dissimilar to it. The Brethren church, however, has no other, and will not have; because it argues that to make a creed just like the Gospel would be superfluous and could not be of any advantage to anybody, as we have that already, and we might as well adopt the New Testament at once. Should we attempt to make one different from the Gospel, it must necessarily be contrary to it. If we should omit anything from it which the gospel contains, it would be too small; if we add anything to it which is not found in the Word, it would be too large. Hence we do not attempt to make any improvement upon it, but take the simple, unadulterated Word or God, for our creed, profession of faith and rule of church government. Not merely *pretend* to do so, but do it in pretense and practice. Any one, therefore, who is a candidate for membership in the Brethren church, should obey carefully one of the commandments of Jesus: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." John 5: 39. Such persons make the best of members, as the apostles testify in their Acts: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so." Acts 17: 11. They were more *noble* because they received the Word readily and searched the Scriptures daily to strengthen their faith. The same works will give favor in the sight of the Lord, and should elevate us to nobility of christian character in the church at the present time. To all inquirers in regard to our church doctrine, ordinances and practices, we say, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8: 20. "Seek ye out the book of the Lord, and read." Isaiah 34: 16. Knowing must precede doing; hence we must be learners before we can become doers of the word. And therefore Christ instructed his disciples to teach first and then to baptize. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them." Matth. 28: 19.

The above will, we hope, be accepted as quite specific and full. And perhaps nothing farther will be desired; but we occasionally come across parties who raise an imaginary difficulty of another kind. They seem to think that the Word is not definite, and must be interpreted. In accordance with this view some man, a set of men, a college, conference, or synod, will go to work and formulate and publish such an interpretation of the Scriptures as may suit their views and tastes. Such interpretation or views upon the Gospel is then adopted by some society and becomes their creed or profession of faith. The Augsburg Confession is such an instance. It was an interpretation of the scriptures by the University at Augsburg. Other creeds have been brought about in a similar manner.

This interpreting question is a matter of much importance to us. If it is really necessary that the scriptures must be interpreted by one class of people to another in order that the latter may obtain salvation, then the necessity of creeds will be established, for a creed is nothing more or less than an interpretation of the meaning of scripture, as it is conceived by the interpreter. Peter says: "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Peter 1: 20. Now, if the scriptures are not of a private or personal, or special interpretation, then they must be intended to be understood according to the principle of a common or general interpretation or meaning. Hence there is no occasion for any interpretation and so also no necessity for any creed.

From the foregoing considerations it would appear, that, to give a full account of the true doctrine of the Brethren church, would be nothing more or less than to preach the Gospel of Christ, and the whole Gospel at that. That is a life work, and cannot be couched within the limits of an ordinary newspaper article, much less written in a letter. But the Gospel may be divided into parts; and it is work of the minister of the Gospel to "rightly divide the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2: 15. It is historical, descriptive, prophetical and doctrinal, and these several parts have their uses and purposes, to instruct, edify and qualify men for a higher state of life and enjoyment. Of the historical, descriptive and prophetical departments, our querist, likely, does not desire any special exposition. He would likely say of them, "All these have I known from my youth up." Luke 18: 21.

It is presumed that our querist has read the law and the prophets, and perhaps what he really wants to know is more in regard to the Brethren church, its manner of obeying and "living out" the Gospel of Christ, than as to what the scripture teaches.

First, then, we believe and teach "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." 1 Cor. 15: 3, 4.

We believe that Christ brought from heaven the Father's will, for no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." Matth. 11: 27. "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." John 14: 24. That by His obedience to the Father's will He was made perfect, and "became the author of salvation unto all them that obey him." Heb. 5: 9. That the word which he brought unto men is the Gospel of Christ, and is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Rom. 1: 16. That there is no salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Acts 4: 12.

We believe that men must attain unto righteousness through Christ, and as Christ obtained his righteousness, namely through obedience. "For it became him, *for* whom are all things, and *by* whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." Hebrews 2: 10, 11. And again: "I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father has appointed it unto me." Luke 22: 29. He only became the author of eternal salvation "to *all them* that OBEY him." Heb. 5: 9. "The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; Galatians 3: 22, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3: 23.

We believe that by obeying the truth, (the word of God is the truth. John 17: 17,) through the Spirit we may again purify our hearts. 1 Peter 1: 22, Acts 15: 9. We have much to say of obedience. In fact we believe in it; we believe it enters largely into our christian make-up, and is an important factor in our righteousness. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of OBEDIENCE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS." Rom. 6: 16. "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. 2: 13. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matth. 7: 21. "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James 1: 25. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Samuel 15: 22. "Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments." 1 John 2: 3. Read also the fourth and fifth verses.

(*Continued Next Week.*)

Who was chosen to fill the place of Judas as an Apostle? J. H. WILLIAMS.

There is some controversy about this. Some are for Paul and some are for Matthias. There are arguments for both sides of the question. Concerning Matthias, it is argued that his appointment was without divine authority, before the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was given to guide the apostles into all truth, and when the only divine injunction laid on them was to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high. This is one side and undoubtedly it is entitled to some weight.

On the other hand, it is argued that after the Spirit came, he was one of the twelve that stood up as apostles to declare the Gospel and announce the terms of salvation. This also is entitled to some weight.

As we are entitled to an opinion also, we believe that the election of Matthias was not divinely authorized, but we would not dare to be too emphatic on this; all we know is that we are not able to prove he was divinely appointed. But it is hardly important enough to quarrel about. That Paul was divinely appointed an apostle is beyond doubt, but whether to fill the place of Judas or not, we do not think it necessary to decide.

When we are investigating the conduct of any member, would it be right to take testimony of persons not members of the church? U. T.

Under the old regime it was not considered right to receive outside testimony, and much dishonesty and wrong perpetrated by unprincipled church members was and still is winked at, because of this unreasonable practice. We hope this will not be the case among the Brethren. It it is truth a church seeks, it should be sought wherever it can be found.

What is the length of time represented by a week, as in Dan. 9: 24, 27? STUDENT.

The most generally accepted interpretation among commentators is that each day represents a year, (Ezekiel 4; 6), therefore a week will be seven years. This however is not admitted by all interpreters.

Who was Melchisadek? CHAS. GAINES.

King of Salem, and priest of the most high God. See Genesis 14: 18.

What does the "filth of the flesh" mean, in 1 Peter 3: 21? J. J. S.

There are many different views concerning this. Some people, who would be glad to find some excuse for their wrong-doing, claim it means the sins of the flesh. This would be very accommodating for such persons, but unfortunately other passages would seriously conflict with this interpretation. Others think it means merely the uncleanliness of the skin. But we have an idea that it refers to the legal uncleanness from which, according to the Jewish law, the people had to be cleansed. See Hebrews 9: 13, 14. Baptism does not consist of fleshly rites and carnal ordinances, but has to do with the conscience. It is "for the remission of sins," not the cleansing from legal polutions.

What are we to understand by 1 John 3: 9? JOHN FULLER.

The verse referred to reads: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." This is one of the principal texts that the Sanctificationists quote for their views, and every other Scripture that conflicts with this is